



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

MEDIA ADVISORY
April 30, 2003

Contact: Mitchel Benson
(916) 653-4052

TREASURER ANGELIDES CALLS FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Treasurer proposes 'folding' medical portion of workers comp into health coverage

SACRAMENTO, CA – State Treasurer Phil Angelides today called for the creation of a universal health care plan for the State, saying that “now is the time and place to establish” such a system and that Californians must “think in bold terms” in doing so.

The Treasurer, in remarks prepared for a keynote speech here to the California Medical Association, said the State must, among other things, seriously consider “folding the medical portion of workers’ compensation into workplace health coverage – reducing overall costs for employers and employees alike.”

Under the Treasurer’s approach, universal health coverage would “offer basic and adequate coverage for all Californians;” “center on the doctor-patient relationship – not the HMO-investment banker relationship;” “encourage – to the greatest extent possible – the role of not-for-profit health care plans;” and “contain a continued commitment to stable and affordable liability insurance rates for caregivers.”

“The dysfunction of our health care system demands a comprehensive public policy response,” Angelides said. “For employers, patients, and physicians alike, our health care system has become as scary and unpredictable as Frankenstein’s monster.”

The Treasurer warned that the current system has grown “so dysfunctional that it is beginning to undermine our sustained economic progress.” He cited several threats posed to the State’s economy by the lack of universal coverage, including the burden placed on taxpayers and businesses that must subsidize health care for the uninsured; lost wages and productivity due to illness; and an increasing divide between “haves” and “have-nots” in our society.

The full text of the Treasurer’s speech to the California Medical Association is available online at www.treasurer.ca.gov, under “What’s New,” or by calling Nikki Paschal at (916) 653-3485.